



EXPLAINED

BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT

A short guide

2017



Acknowledgements

Business Continuity Institute

Founded in 1994, the BCI defined a set of practices for individuals to be able to demonstrate their individual capability in business continuity management. These Professional Practices form the stages of the business continuity management lifecycle and are described in the BCI's Good Practice Guidelines.

The BCI is the world's leading professional association responsible for improving organizational resilience through building business continuity capability and professional development of individuals all over the world.

The BCI vision is a world where all organizations, communities and societies become more resilient.

The BCI core values are professionalism, reliability, and inclusivity. The BCI is built on the principle of professionalising business continuity practice, and continues to be the authoritative and reliable source of information on all aspects of business continuity theory and practice for professionals, and offers a wealth of online resources via www.thebci.org. The Good Practice Guidelines have been revised as part of the BCI's process of continual improvement and ongoing development of our body of knowledge to remain relevant to professionals worldwide.



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Introduction

Every risk manager is aware that not every threat or risk can be completely avoided and businesses must plan what they will do if such risk events occurs. The aim of business continuity (BC) is for the business to recognise and respond to a disruptive incident, enable the crucial elements of the business to remain operational, restore the business to its original state and to potentially enable it to adapt to a new state. In the words of Deborah Higgins of the Business Continuity Institute (BCI), *'it's not only about keeping calm and carrying on, but adapting to change to build resilience.'*

Business Continuity Management could not be more relevant to organisations at this time. Airmic members report that the risks faced by their businesses are changing at unprecedented pace. The Wannacry cyber-attack in May 2017 showed the real impact of emerging risks such as cyber and the changing face of terrorism risk can be seen in the multiple attacks across the UK and Europe over the last few years. Meanwhile, events such as Hurricane Harvey demonstrate the significant impact of seemingly 'traditional' risks. All of these incidents, whether impacting systems, people or facilities share one thing in common, the disruption of business processes and

activities. Businesses must be able to respond to such disruption, and adapt to all changes in their internal and external operating environment.

True business continuity isn't always about responding to low frequency - high severity incidents. By understanding the more routine and non-physical threats to the business and ensuring that 'business as usual' can be maintained, business resilience is enhanced.

'The capability of the organisation to continue the delivery of products or services at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident.'

Source: ISO 22301: 2012
The International standard
for Business continuity
management (BCM)

This explained guide is designed to:

- **Demonstrate the importance of business continuity to the broader risk management function**
- **Present the business continuity institute's business continuity management life cycle, which can be used as a framework for an organisation to build resilience into their organisation**
- **Provide risk managers with the appropriate language and key questions to ask when developing a more effective working relationship with their business continuity manager, if this is held in a separate function**

2 What is business continuity management

Business continuity management – a definition

ISO 22301:2012 defines business continuity management (BCM) as a “*holistic management process that identifies potential threats to an organisation and understands the impacts to business operations those threats, if realised, might cause, and which provides a framework for building organisational resilience with the capability of an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value-creating activities.*”

The BCI BCM Lifecycle describes the ongoing cycle of activities that is used to implement a BC programme to build organisational resilience. This is described in detail in section 4.

The strategic objectives of business continuity management

An organisation must be confident that it has plans in place to deal with a disruptive incident that affects its operations, and potentially its

reputation, and demonstrate this confidence to its stakeholders. Crucially, these plans must allow it to meet the following strategic objectives:

1. Keep the time in which products are unavailable to key customers and markets at a minimum
2. Maintain optimum volume of sales to key customers and markets while normal operations are re-established
3. Ensure survival

The phases of a business continuity response

The phases of business continuity are described below and in Figure 1. The primary outcome of business continuity management, is to enable the organisation to:

1. Identify the minimum operations required for the business to survive
2. Understand the immediate and

short-term actions to respond to an incident that adversely affects these operations. These actions will link directly to the emergency response and crisis management activities of the organisation, which may include damage assessment and containment.

3. Develop short and medium-term arrangements that minimise the adverse effects of the incident by restoring operations to the minimum required level to achieve survival. This will include contacting customers, suppliers and other stakeholders and restoring key functions.
4. Develop medium and long-term arrangements that restore the business to original operating levels or improve on them. These actions will link directly to the disaster recovery activities of the organisation, which will address the market impact of the incident.

Prevention & tracking

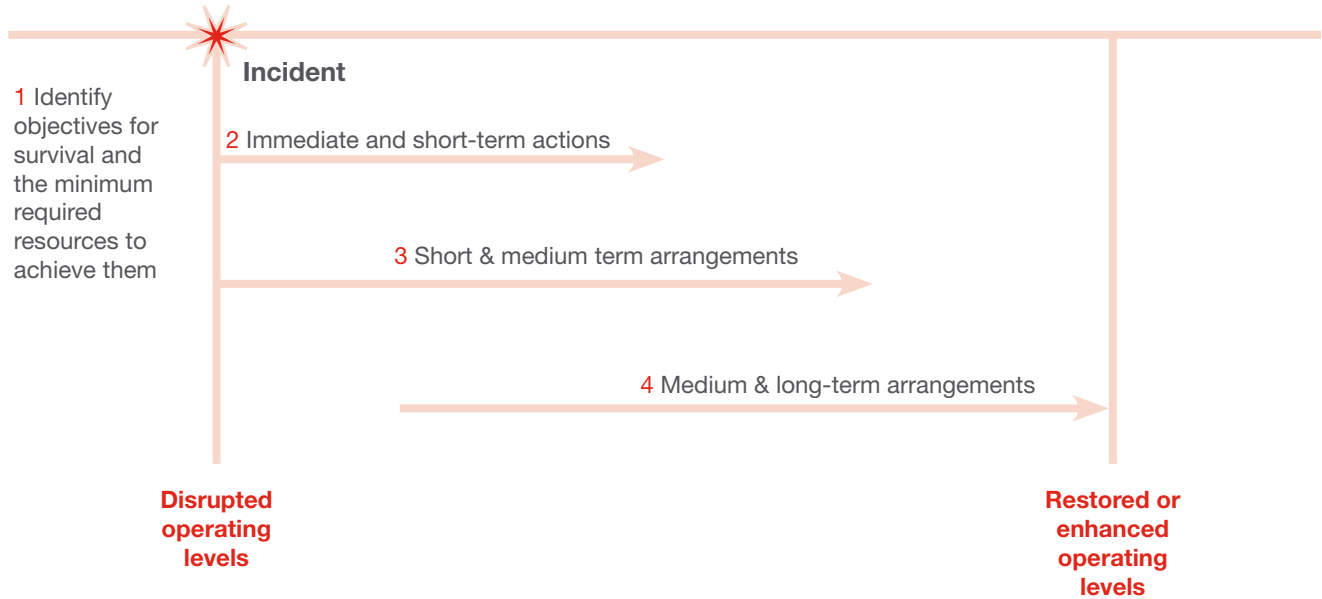


Figure 1: The phases of a business continuity response

Business continuity and risk management

Both BC and RM disciplines have the aim to identify and proactively address risks and threats to the business and therefore share a number of features including the identification and analysis of risk. The critical difference between the two is in how risk is assessed:

- **The risk function consider the types of risk to the business**

What is the likelihood of each risk manifesting?

What would the magnitude of the impact on the business be?

What measures can be put in place to reduce the risk from occurring?

What opportunities are available to us because of these risks?

- **The business continuity function consider the impact of a risk on the business**

If a risk event or circumstance disrupted our people, facilities or systems what would the impact be to our activities?

What activities, if disrupted, would cause the greatest impact on our overall business strategy?

How can we minimise the disruption to those activities?

There is clear overlap between the two disciplines in the risk assessment stage. Risk professionals will consider all risks to the business, whilst also horizon scanning to identify longer term business developments that may manifest as risks in the future. BC professionals can complement this assessment through their Business Impact Analysis. This analyses business activities and identifies the impact of a

disruption to them if a risk identified in the risk assessment occurs.

“Business Continuity is inseparable from the Enterprise Risk Management programme. It's critical for these areas to work together to develop relationships across the business in order to ensure that the right people are involved, and plans and processes are in place to help prevent potential incidents escalating into a crisis wherever possible.”

Karla Cruickshanks, Risk & Business Continuity Manager, DLA Piper

Business continuity and crisis management

Crisis management is the process by which an organisation deals with a major disruptive and unexpected event that threatens to harm the organisation, its stakeholders, or the public.

Crisis management differs from business continuity in that the discipline is largely focused on the management strategies and processes required to deal with a disruptive incident from the moment it occurs, whilst business continuity looks further into the response and recovery timeline. However, the two cannot be considered separately and both form part of the overarching ERM programme.

Business continuity and resilience

BC must not be considered simply as a risk treatment strategy to operational risk incidents. Risk response, the capability of a business to quickly restore business activities after disruption is a key principle of resilience.

BC must be built into the strategy and governance of an organisation. The discipline of identifying the most value-creating products and services of a business, the activities and dependencies that underpin these, and developing plans to ensure their continued operations means a business will be able to adapt to changing circumstances.

“My responsibility is to ensure critical incidents are managed appropriately whilst maintaining the essential components of our infrastructure and supply chain. I work daily with our operational teams and run quarterly governance meetings with process owners. We review recent incidents, highlight gaps and understand how solutions can be integrated into operational procedures and resilience planning to deliver business continuity.”

**Business resilience manager,
FTSE 100 Retailer**

4 The BCI - BCM Lifecycle

The BCI's BCM Lifecycle (Figure 3) outlines the activities that an organisation must undertake to develop, continuously monitor and improve its business continuity programme, with an aim to improve and build resilience.

Figure 3: The BCI BCM Lifecycle: Building organisational resilience



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The six professional practices of the BCM Lifecycle

<p>Policy and Programme Management</p> <p>Where the policy is established and the programme of implementation is defined.</p>	<p>Embedding</p> <p>An ongoing practice that integrates the BC programme into business as usual activities and culture.</p>
<p>Analysis</p> <p>The stage that reviews and assesses an organisation to identify its objectives, how it functions and the constraints of its operating environment.</p>	<p>Design</p> <p>Information from the analysis stage is used to identify and solutions to determine how continuity can be achieved in the event of an incident.</p>
<p>Implementation</p> <p>The solutions identified at the design stage are used to develop and execute the business continuity plan.</p>	<p>Validation</p> <p>The BCM Lifecycle is tested and verified to ensure that it meets its objectives and is appropriate to the business.</p>

The BCI encourage business continuity professionals to specifically engage with the following key functions to ensure BC is recognised and embedded across the business:

- **Risk management**

BC and RM must collaborate on all practices of the lifecycle

- **Emergency management**

Key to the design and implementation practices, ensuring that BC plans recognize the involvement or 'first responder' organisations such as emergency services and local authorities

- **Facilities management**

Key to identifying continuity and recover strategies where facilities and workplaces aren't available

- **Information security**

Key to analysing the impact of systems interruption on business activities and identifying continuity and recovery strategies

- **Supply chain**

Key to assessing the timescales for a disruption to each supplier to have an impact on own business, and how this can be mitigated

4.1 BCM Lifecycle – policy and programme management

Identifying how business continuity will fit into the overarching context of the business.

For business continuity to be effective it must sit within the overall strategy of the business, and there must be a formal process for its implementation, control and validation.

Understanding the business context

Before developing BC plans there must be an understanding of;

- How the business currently operates
- What the latest developments in the business are, and what is its strategy for the future
- What the approach to risk is and what risk and resilience strategies are in place
- What business continuity solutions

are already in place and who currently has ownership

- Who the BCM team need to collaborate with across the various business functions to develop and enhance the business's BCM

The Business Continuity Policy

To ensure that BC is recognised across the business, top management must communicate the BC policy widely. The BC policy should be short, clear, and communicate the following;

- Why a BCM Lifecycle must be implemented

Summarising the key threats to the business

- The organisation's scope for BC

Summarising the activities and scenarios that BCM will protect

- BCM resource requirements

Summarising the financial support, staffing (considering the required roles, responsibilities and competencies), governance of the programme and the role of top management in championing and monitoring all activities

- The framework for the BCM Lifecycle management

Summarising a set of principles, guidelines and standards, including a process of monitoring and audit.

The policy must be regularly reviewed at pre-agreed intervals or following any significant changes to the internal operations or external business environment.

The Scope of the Business Continuity Management Programme

The BC policy will define the scope of BC activities that will be undertaken, i.e. which business activities will be included by the BCM Lifecycle. These will typically be value adding activities, e.g. activities involved in the delivery of key products or services to customers or activities involved in ensuring regulatory or legal compliance. Figure 4 describes a cycle of questions businesses must continually ask themselves to ensure the scope of the policy is appropriate. The decisions can be refined using cost benefit analysis, SWOT, PESTLE and market analysis techniques.

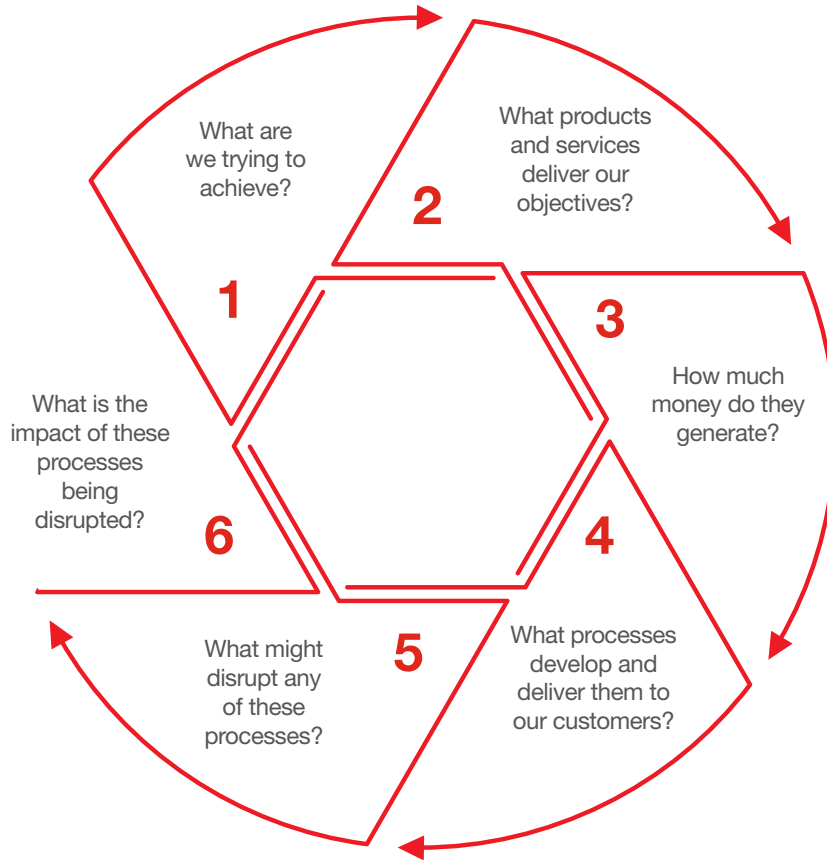
The scope of the programme will also define the scale and scope of scenarios that the BC programme responds to. For example – it will identify those ‘worst case scenarios’ where the BC programme will be unable to respond appropriately and the business will need

to take strategic decisions, including whether it can continue operating at all.

The business must also consider the BC scope for outsourced activities. Although the responsibility for continuity typically remains with the business a review of the outsourcing partner’s BC programme should form part of the tender process, and their BCM performance monitored.



Figure 4: First questions when considering the scope for a BC programme



BCM Roles and responsibilities

The success of the BCM Lifecycle rests of having clear roles and responsibilities for developing, embedding and improving the programme across the business. Depending on the size and scale of the organisation there may need to be several tiers of individuals with BC responsibility. However, for all businesses a senior employee must be accountable for the role of BC in the overall resilience programme of the business, and an individual or team should be responsible for the overall management of the programme.

"Our business continuity team are trained professionals, sitting within the ERM function and have overall responsibility for the BCM Lifecycle.

However, we have assigned BC responsibility to numerous individuals across the global organisation, all who need to be aware of and trained for their duties.

- The 'Gold team' sit at a senior executive level and are responsible for any interruptions that could bring down our entire business, including interruption with a media impact.

- The regional 'silver teams' and on-the-ground 'bronze teams' ensure that more minor localised interruptions are dealt with accordingly."

Risk and Business Continuity Manager

(The BCI refer to the above as strategic, tactical and operational level response)

Programme and policy management

How the risk manager can support BCM

1. Outline the overall risk management and resilience framework to the bc team, ensuring their work is embedded fully
2. Summarise the organisational view of risk, including risk appetite and risk awareness
3. Engage the BC team in risk workshops, including wider horizon scanning exercises responding to business and external developments

4.2 BCM Lifecycle – embedding Business Continuity

Integrating business continuity into the culture of the business

The activities of the BCM Lifecycle must be fully implemented into the overall strategy, day-to-day activities and operational culture of the business to achieve operational resilience.

Embedding BC into culture

The culture of a business describes ‘how things are done’ and incorporates the combined attitudes and behaviours of the members of the organisation. Whilst behaviours can be relatively easily controlled through set processes and procedures, the attitudes of individuals can be more difficult to shape. Embedding BCM into organisational culture requires:

- A clear ‘tone from the top’ that BCM is vital to the priorities of the business, demonstrated through adequate staffing, time and financial resourcing

- Communication to all levels that BCM is integral to the business and should not be considered a separate activity, including consulting key individuals on how they believe BCM should be undertaken
- Integration of BCM responsibilities into business as usual operational activities and wider risk management responsibilities and performance measures
- Undertaking BC exercises to demonstrate the consequences of BC action (and inaction) in a vibrant way

This is challenging and ongoing task. More information can be found in Airmic’s The Importance of Managing Corporate Culture guide.

Developing appropriate skills and competence

Effective BCM requires the appropriate level of skills and competence. Not all involved individuals will have the appropriate expertise. Therefore, a training and awareness programme may be required

An awareness programme of communications, presentations or staff interviews is required to increase overall knowledge of BCM across the organisation. These may cover recent BC incidents or exercises and feedback and actions from these. This must be supplemented by appropriate training programmes. All staff should be trained to recognise potential interruption events, escalate these to the required team and understand response plans and their own roles in these. More extensive training will be required for those with BC response responsibilities. This will include training in crisis management, incident leadership and education on specific continuity and recovery plans.

Embedding Business Continuity

How the risk manager can support BCM

- Describe the current level of risk and threat awareness
- Identify the existing bc skills and competencies within the risk and related functions
- Incorporate BC training and awareness into the overall risk training and awareness framework



4.3 BCM Lifecycle – analysis

Reviewing and assessing the impact of interruption on business objectives

The business must analyse how an organisation functions and how individual activities and processes support its overall objectives. This allows the business to prioritise continuity solutions and mitigation measures to minimise the impact of disruptive events. This analysis has the added benefit of highlighting any business inefficiencies and possible improvements.

'In the time of crisis all resources; money, people, time are scarce and must be directed appropriately. Not everything can be solved at once and the business must take time to determine which activities are critical to maintaining continuity and achieving strategic objectives'

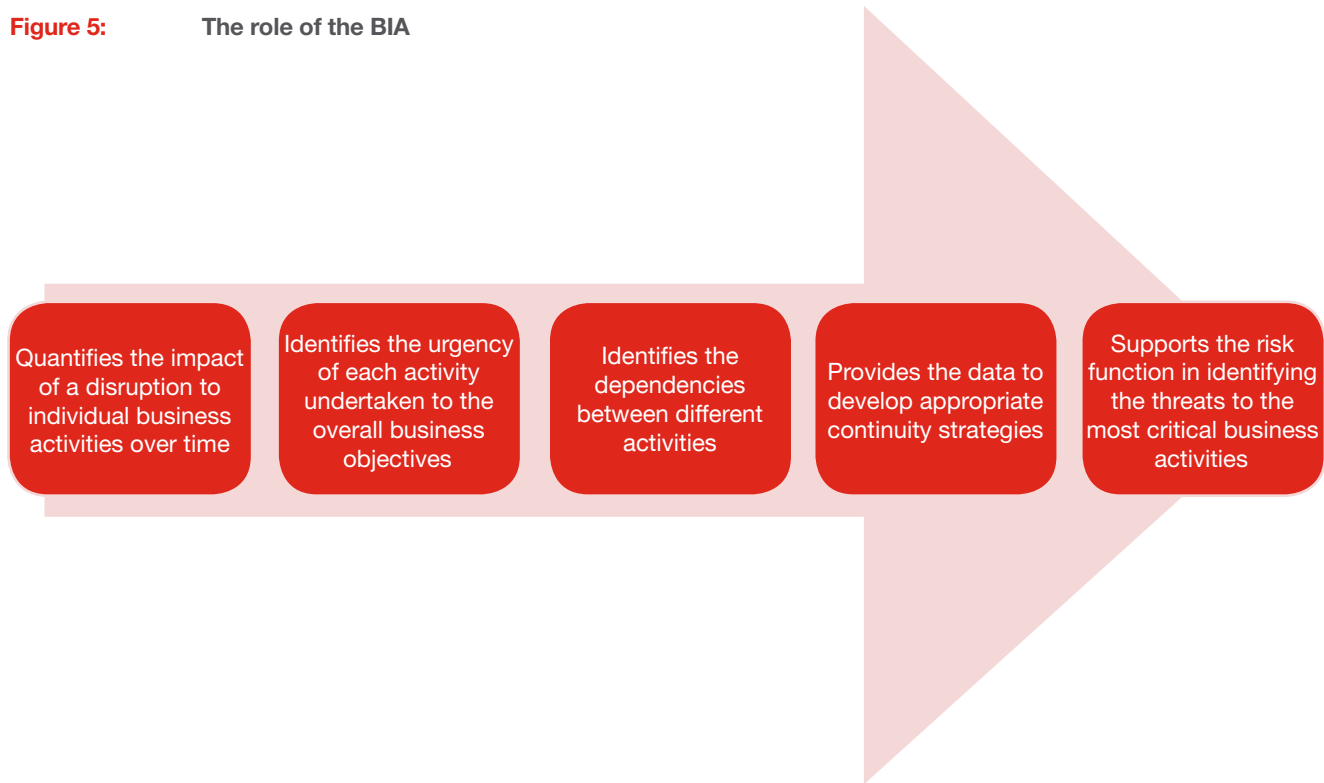
**Kerry Balenthiran, Group Manager,
Business Risk Consulting (EMEA), FM
Global**

The Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

The BCI describe the BIA as the 'foundation on which the BCM Lifecycle is built'. This differs from the risk assessments undertaken by risk managers in that it looks to understand the impact of disruption on the business, rather than considering what threats might cause this interruption. However, the two must talk to one another as the BIA can help identify the threats to the most urgent business activities and where disruption will have the greatest impact on customers and stakeholders.



Figure 5: The role of the BIA



The analysis can identify the most urgent *product and services*, determine the *processes that support their delivery* and identify and prioritise the individual activities that support these processes respectively. The business will need to consider all its activities from input of resources e.g. HR, IT and financial activities through to output of products, e.g. marketing, sales, distribution and servicing activities.

In all cases the BIA places a time lens on each activity. Business continuity professionals will quantify and refer to several key measures for each process, activity across the business;

Undertaking a BIA

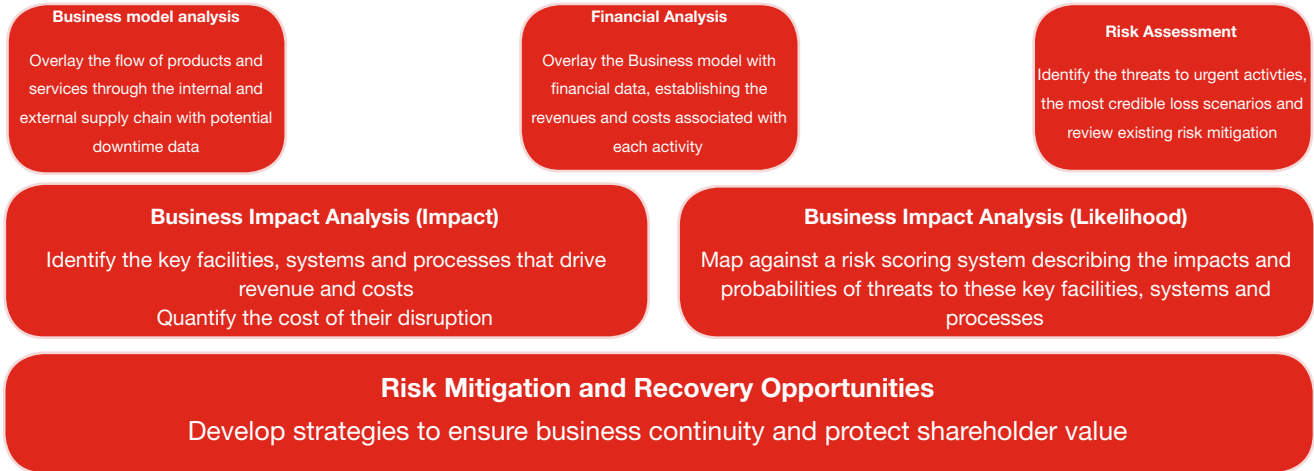
The BIA methodology will depend on the size, scope and sector of the business, as well as the individual performing the exercise. A key challenge is finding all areas of the business consider their activities most critical. FM Global suggest taking a mathematical

approach which reduces any subjectivity, as summarised in Figure 6.

Maximum Acceptable Outage / Maximum Tolerable Period of Disruption (MAO or MTPD)

The maximum time for the impacts arising from the non-availability of a process to be unacceptable. Essentially, this is the deadline for when a process needs to be up and running again after an interruption

Figure 6: The key stages of BIA



"Identifying the likely loss scenarios and quantifying the impact of a potential disruption are critical to developing the appropriate risk mitigation strategies."

Kerry Balenthiran, Group Manager, Business Risk Consulting (EMEA), FM Global

Analysis

How the risk manager can support BCM

- Share the risk register and scored threat evaluation
- Collaborate on establishing which processes and activities will be interrupted by identified threats
- Continually share any identified changes to the threat landscape

4.4 BCM Lifecycle – design

Developing the solutions to achieve continuity

Having identified the various activities most urgent to the business, a range of tactical options to protect these activities (and therefore ensure continuity of the business) must be designed.

Continuity solutions

Recovery solutions will need to respond to any disruption to

- People – disruption to access to skills and knowledge
- Resources – disruption to access to IT / telecoms systems, equipment, information, materials (can include disruption to product and services from suppliers)
- Premises – disruption to workplace and other relevant buildings/ facilities

When designing continuity solutions, the greatest challenge will be balancing the recovery speed and cost of the solution. Therefore, businesses must carefully agree the time period that a product, process or activity must be restored.

Recovery Time Objective (RTO)

The timeframe requirement for how long it should take to recover a process from the point of disruption. This should be less than the MAO/MTPD, to ensure that the overall survival of the business isn't threatened.

Table 1: The BCIs business continuity solutions

Method	Description	Recovery Time Objective
Diversification	Undertaking activities at geographically separated sites, so activity can continue at one site, if it is interrupted at the other	Minutes or hours
Replication	Copying resources on a regular basis to a ‘dormant’ second site, which can pick up activities if the original site is interrupted	Hours to days
Standby	A standby facility is made operational after original site is interrupted	More than a day
Post-incident acquisition	Pre-qualified suppliers are engaged after interruption to pick-up interrupted activities	Days to weeks

Businesses should identify a variety of different solutions, each restoring the particular activity within different RTOs and at different costs. Table 1 summarises the continuity solutions that a business may adopt. The BC team should present a cost benefit analysis of each solution to senior management, who will select the solutions to be implemented as formal BC plans.

The importance of IT

In most businesses, most processes are underpinned by IT systems and the data they hold or process. Therefore, businesses must also consider the data requirements of the business after an interruption

Recovery Point Objective (RPO)

The point to which information or data used by an activity must be restored to enable the activity to operate once restored.

An example of selecting strategies – data recovery

A business must identify the amount of data that can be lost after an interruption, without an unacceptable level of adverse consequences. Based on the RTO and RPO they have a variety of options available to them;

- **Active / Active recovery**
Maintaining two data centres in sync with one another at separate locations, and linked to separate power sources. This would be the costliest option, but appropriate where the RTO and RPO for certain activities are both zero.
- **Active / Passive recovery**
Maintaining two centres that aren't in sync, but data is replicated between the two on a regular basis. If data is replicated once a day, there is potential for a whole days' worth of data to be lost after an interruption. The more frequent the replication of data the more costly the solution. This strategy is appropriate where the RTO and RPO are small, but greater than zero
- **Use of a hot / warm site** – Data is passed to a normally 'shut down' site at the point of interruption. These sites are often provided by recovery providers, and may be shared amongst several businesses, increasing the risk.

The BC team will need to present a cost-benefit analysis of each of these solutions. Senior management will need to consider the urgency of restoring the data and associated processes, their obligations to customers and regulatory requirements when selecting a strategy.

Risk and threat mitigation measures

Where a threat to an urgent process or activity is identified the BC solutions should be supplemented by traditional risk mitigation techniques to limit the likelihood and impact of specific threats.

Response structure

Implementing continuity solutions should be supported by a response structure which should identify the relevant individuals and teams, their roles and responsibilities and the relationships between one another.

Design

How the risk manager can support BCM

- Relate potential strategies to the risk appetite statement when presenting to senior management
- use the risk register to collaborate on identifying the risks to urgent processes that may require additional threat mitigation measures
- facilitate links to other business functions to ensure strategies are relevant, realistic and feasible e.g. engage HR on plans relating to loss of people



4.5 BCM Lifecycle – implementation

Implementing and executing business continuity plans

Once the BC strategies are selected in the design stage decisions on how they will be implemented into the business must be made and documented. In addition, the associated responsibilities, priorities and resources to invoke these plans must be identified and realised.

Business continuity plans (BCPs)

BCPs are defined by ISO 22301 as ‘documented procedures that guide organisations to respond, recover, resume and restore to a pre-defined level of operation following disruption’.

The number of plans will depend on the scale, nature and complexity of the business. Plans may relate to different areas of the business, type of interruption or type of threat. The largest of businesses may have strategic, tactical and operational plans that relate to interruptions of varying characteristic.

For example, strategic plans may only involve responding to those incidents that require a media response, whilst operational plans provide for the recovery of localised activities to an agreed level of service.

Plans are likely to cover:

1. The owner of the plan
2. The objectives of the plans and type of interruption it addresses
3. The conditions or circumstances for the plan to be invoked
4. The response team, and individual responsibilities
5. Links to other BCPs and crisis management plans
6. Plan strategies, as selected in the design stage
7. Internal and external

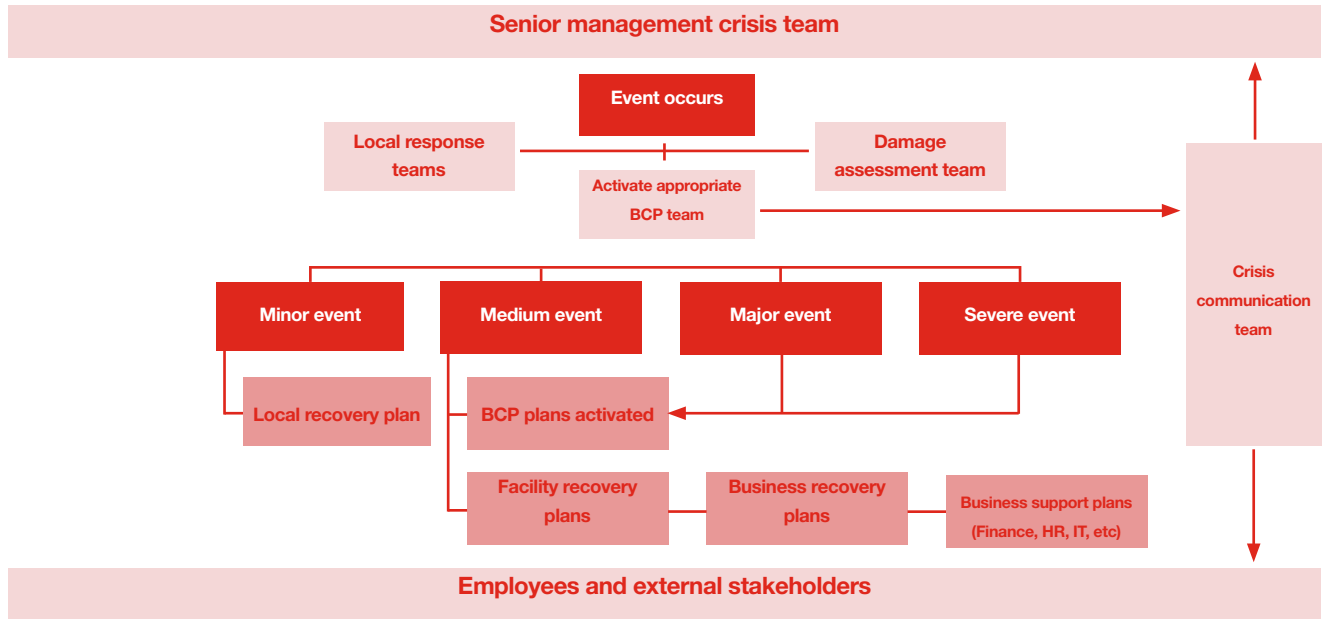
communication strategies, including who across the business should have access to the plan before any interruption

8. Success criteria and ‘stand down’ procedures
9. Testing and review of the plan

Mobilising the team and invoking the plan

Larger businesses are likely to have a number of plans responding to various levels of disruption and types of incident. Therefore, the different circumstances and conditions in which the relevant team will be notified and the corresponding BC plan invoked and escalated the relevant must be documented. Figure 7 is adapted from FM Global’s Model BC structure, and demonstrates how various teams may sit together. Each of the four types of event should be defined by disruption levels or impact thresholds.

Figure 7: Business Continuity Plans – team structures



Implementation

How the risk manager can support BCM

- Update on changes to the threat landscape to ensure that BC plans remain feasible and relevant
- Ensure effective links between business continuity and crisis management plans
- Connect established KRIs to BC plans to ensure they are invoked as early as possible

4.6 BCM Lifecycle – validation

Verifying that the BCM Lifecycle meets the objective of the BC policy

Like all management programmes BCM must be continuously tested, monitored and reviewed to ensure that it meets the requirements of the organisation and its objectives. The programme must be improved as the organisation and its environment changes, to ensure resilience.

Exercising BC plans

BC plans can be exercised and tested through simple discussion, desk-top scenario exercises and more extensive command post or 'live' exercises. The first two are discussion based and can be used to test the feasibility and relevance of the recovery plans. The latter two involve 'rehearsing' the response to a simulated disruption event. This tests both the response, and the communication plans across the business. All exercises help raise the awareness BC, as well as a number of other benefits;

- Qualify that all information in the plan is correct
- Test the involved persons and build their own confidence in their responsibilities

- Identify areas for improvement or incorrect assumptions
- Test the effectiveness of the recovery strategies, and whether they will meet the RTO and RPO
- Ensure recovery procedures are manageable and understood
- Test whether communication plans are appropriate

Maintenance of BCM

Maintenance of the BCM should be part of normal management activities, and in particular change management processes. This is to ensure that when business processes or structures are changed, the BC plan is reviewed accordingly. This also includes ensuring that any weaknesses and lessons learned from real or simulated interruption incidents are incorporated into the programme.

Review of BCM

A formal process of review should be undertaken. This will test that the BCM

is successfully implemented into the business and meets its objectives. The BC team themselves can perform a self-assessment of the overall BCM Lifecycle and performance appraisals of the relevant persons. Additionally, BCM should be incorporated into the organisation's formal audit programme to provide an independent assessment that BCM processes are being followed and an opinion on whether they are contributing appropriately to operational resilience.

Validation

How the risk manager can support BCM

- Develop realistic scenarios based on the risk register to test plans
- Engage the insurer and broker in exercises, to ensure that insurance cover connects with plans
- Include in audits of overall enterprise risk management framework

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